

Susie Dent

Author/Presenter



Books

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Publications

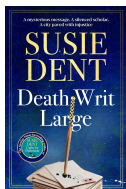
Publications

Publication Details

Notes

DEATH WRIT LARGE

2026, Zaffre



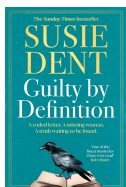
A mysterious letter. A silenced scholar. A city paved with injustice.

When mysterious symbols appear as graffiti around Oxford, lexicographer Martha Thornhill recognises them from a runic alphabet created by a deceased fantasy writer whose papers she once worked on. But this is no publicity stunt, and tensions intensify when further graffiti is found near the body of a university lecturer.

Martha is not the only one to have doubts when the suspicious death is assumed by police to be a suicide. Called upon to lend their linguistic expertise to the case, Martha and her colleagues begin to unearth a tragedy that extends beyond the ancient walls of the university. As new messages portend more death, it's clear that a spirit of vengeance is stalking the city's streets, and may be reaching out towards them too.

GUILTY BY DEFINITION

2024, Zaffre



A coded letter. A missing woman. A truth waiting to be found.

When an anonymous letter is delivered to the Clarendon English Dictionary office, it becomes rapidly clear that this is not the usual word-related enquiry. Instead, the letter hints at sinister events linked to a particular year. For editor Martha Thornhill, the date can mean only one thing: the summer her brilliant older sister Charlie went missing. Ten years on, Martha and her family are no closer to unravelling the mystery of Charlie's disappearance - until now.

As more letters arrive, Martha and her team follow the linguistic clues to a troubling truth. It seems Charlie was keeping a powerful secret, and that someone is desperate to keep it well and truly buried.

Guilty by Definition is a love letter not only to language but to the city of Oxford, wrapped within an intriguing mystery of a missing woman and considering the emotional aftershocks of her disappearance on those left behind.

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ROOTS OF HAPPINESS

2023, Penguin Random House Children's UK



Susie Dent, bestselling author, broadcaster and word expert, is on a mission to find light in the deepest, darkest corners of our language.

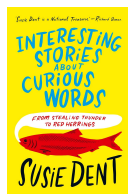
It takes just a short browse through the dictionary to spot how it is filled with negative words. But Susie has searched far and wide to unearth happy and uplifting words and phrases that, in some cases, are long forgotten, while others have only just been discovered.

Paired with beautiful illustrations, this is the perfect book to lift you out of your mubble fubbles (a slightly sad mood), make you grin like a gigglemug (someone who never stops smiling), and have you feeling forblissed (extremely happy) in no time.

This joyous collection of 100 positive words and their origins will show readers young and old just how wonderful language can be – and how you can use your words to make the world a happier place.

INTERESTING STORIES ABOUT CURIOUS WORDS: FROM STEALING THUNDER TO RED HERRINGS

2023, John Murray



Who was SWEET FANNY ADAMS?

What's the dramatic true story behind STEALING THUNDER?

Why is it CHANCING YOUR ARM when you take a risk?

What do bears have to do with LICKING INTO SHAPE?

Or robbers with PULLING SOMEONE'S LEG?

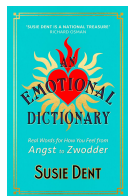
Why are CIRCLES VICIOUS?

And, what's so bad about a WHITE ELEPHANT?

'Nobody on earth knows more about the English language than Susie Dent' Gyles Brandreth

AN EMOTIONAL DICTIONARY: REAL WORDS FOR HOW YOU FEEL

2022, John Murray



Whether it's the distress of a bad haircut (*age-otōri*) or longing for the food someone else is eating (*groaking*), the pleasure found in other people's happiness (*confelicity*) or the shock of jumping into icy water (*curglaff*), there are real words to pinpoint exactly how you feel and Susie Dent, Queen of Countdown's Dictionary Corner and lexicographer extraordinaire, is going to help you find them.

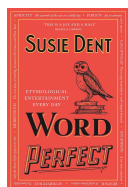
Here are 1001 terms everyone needs, whether it's the best kind of hug (*cwtch*), the relief found in swearing (*lalochezia*), or the ability to endure till the end (*pertolerance*).

It's time to rediscover the lost positives of language (and be more *gorm*); find out how a stork gave us the word for the love between parent and child, and who the first *maverick* was. Packed with unexpected stories and unforgettable words, on a mission to describe the indescribable, this life-enhancing book will deepen your vocabulary as much as it extends it.

Welcome to the first truly human dictionary, as idiosyncratic and unusual as you are.

WORD PERFECT

2020, John Murray



Welcome to a year of wonder with Susie Dent, lexicographer, logophile, and longtime queen of Countdown's Dictionary Corner.

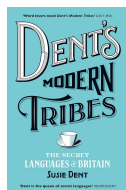
From the real Jack the Lad to the theatrically literal story behind stealing someone's thunder, from tattle (forgetting someone's name at the very moment you need it) to snaccident (the unintentional eating of an entire packet of biscuits), WORD PERFECT is a brilliant linguistic almanac full of unforgettable stories, fascinating facts, and surprising etymologies tied to every day of the year. You'll never be lost for words again.

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DENT'S MODERN TRIBES: THE SECRET LANGUAGES OF BRITAIN

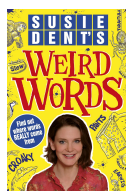
2017, John Murray



Did you know that . . . a soldier's biggest social blunder is called jack brew – making yourself a cuppa without making one for anyone else? That twitchers have an expression for a bird that can't be identified – LBJ (the letters stand for Little Brown Job)? Or that builders call plastering the ceiling doing Lionel Richie's dancefloor? Susie Dent does. Ever wondered why football managers all speak the same way, what a cabbie calls the Houses of Parliament, or how ticket inspectors discreetly request back-up? We are surrounded by hundreds of tribes, each speaking their own distinct slanguage of colourful words, jokes and phrases, honed through years of conversations on the battlefield, in A&E, backstage, or at ten-thousand feet in the air. Susie Dent has spent years interviewing hundreds of professionals, hobbyists and enthusiasts, and the result is an idiosyncratic phrasebook like no other. From the Freemason's handshake to the publican's banter, *Dent's Modern Tribes* takes us on a whirlwind tour of Britain, decoding its secret languages and, in the process, finds out what really makes us all tick.

SUSIE DENT'S WEIRD WORDS

2013, Susie Dent's Weird Words



Susie Dent is here to take children on a rip-roaring tour through some of the most astonishing, amusing and sometimes quite revolting backgrounds of English words. Did you know, for instance, that 'fizzle' originally meant to break wind silently? Over time, it came to describe a weak, spluttering, hissing sound. And you might think that 'ain't' isn't a word you should use, but it is thought the word was once used by kings and queens. As Susie Dent knows, even the most ordinary-sounding word can have the most extraordinary story behind it.

BREWER'S DICTIONARY OF PHRASE AND FABLE

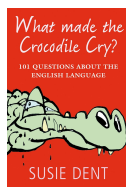
2012, John Murray Learning



Much loved for its wit and wisdom since 1870, *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* takes you on a captivating adventure through its trademark blend of language, culture, myth and legend. Nowhere else could the histories of the guillotine and Guinness stout sit so comfortably alongside the KGB and the Keystone Kops. Brewer's is a catalogue of curiosities and absurdities that, over almost 150 years in print, has acquired near-mythical status. Edited by Susie Dent, this new edition includes a brand new Collection of Curious Words and many new and updated entries. Its pages brim with esoteric and entertaining oddities – everything from curious customs to the world of newspapers and political alliances of yesteryear – all seen through the distinctive Brewer lens. This twentieth edition of *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* encapsulates all the charm and wit that characterise its predecessors and maintains the standards of scholarship and eclecticism that have long been its hallmark. Whether you're a committed Brewerphile or a newcomer to its pages of fascinating entries, this edition will draw you in and keep you glued to its rich mix of eccentric nuggets.

WHAT MADE THE CROCODILE CRY?: 101 QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

2009, Oxford University Press

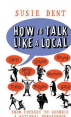


The Blackout Crew have a song with the title 'Put a donk on it' – but what is a 'donk'? Which ending came first: '-ise' or '-ize'? Where does the idea of a 'white elephant' come from? Who decides on the collective noun for something? And what is it that made the crocodile cry? Sparkling with insight and linguistic curiosity, this delightful compendium answers 101 of the most intriguing questions about the English language, from word origins and spelling to grammar and usage. Irresistible to anyone with an interest in the words around them. Supported by Oxford's celebrated dictionary research programme, Susie Dent tackles these and many other fascinating questions in this

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HOW TO TALK LIKE A LOCAL: FROM COCKNEY TO GEORDIE

2008, Random House

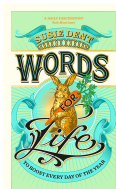


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If you were a Londoner visiting Cornwall would you know how to recognise a grammersow? If you were from the West Country and took a trip up to Scotland, would you be bewildered if someone described you as crabbit? And what if you left your native Belfast for Liverpool, would you understand if someone called you a woollyback? “How to Talk Like a Local” is an entertaining guide that gathers together and explains hundreds of words that you would never find in an ordinary dictionary. From dardledumdue, which means day-dreamer in East Anglia, through forkin robbins, the Yorkshire term for earwigs, to clemt, a Lancashire word that means hungry, it covers the enormously rich variety of regional words that pepper the English language. Not only does it pick out unique and unusual local words, it also draws together the dozens of terms from all over the country that mean the same thing, such as knee-knabbed, crab-ankled and hurked-up for knock-kneed, and obzocky, butters and maftin for ugly. In addition, it digs down to uncover the origins of these words, tracing their routes in to the language. Many terms meaning left-handed, for example, are related to the Kerr family of Ferniehirst Castle in Scotland, who preferred left-handed warriors. And many seemingly new coinages have been around for centuries, such as chav, which derives from a Romany word meaning child, or scouse, which probably comes from lapskaus, a Norwegian word for a sailors’ stew. If you’re intrigued by these colourful words and phrases, if you’re interested in how English is really spoken, or if you want to discover how our language has evolved over the years, “How to Talk Like a Local” will prove irresistible – and enlightening – reading.

WORDS FOR LIFE: TO BOOST EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR

2008, John Murray



Whatever you need, Susie Dent has a word for it. Do you know the name for someone who loves reading in bed, or what a binfluencer does? How about the medieval invention of Lubberland as a place for lazy teenagers, or the story of Mayday as a request for help? Lexicographer extraordinaire and Queen of Countdown’s Dictionary Corner, Susie Dent does and here are her greatest discoveries. From wabbit to dust bunnies, and from the strange history of arse to the best ways to describe moonlight, Words for Life offers a full year’s supply of verbal vitamins guaranteed to brighten and boost every day. Here you will learn of the Mother-in-Law’s Dream as well as the Yuleshard, and discover expressions that can fix (or at least nail) the problems of modern life, whether dealing with unrequited love or unsatisfactory politicians, eating a whole packet of biscuits or forgetting someone’s name. From starting January 1 with your best foot forward (qualtagh) to leaping happily into the unknown (with a drink in your hand) on 31 December, here is the perfect guide to ensure your best year yet – and 365 words you’ll want to keep for life.